

APPLICATION FOR
UNITED STATES LETTERS PATENT

FOR

RETAINING CLIP FOR PERSONAL ARTICLES

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BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Technical Field

The present invention relates to a clip for retaining one or more personal articles. More particularly, the invention relates to a clip for retaining articles such as condoms and concealing the articles beneath clothing.

2. Description of Related Art

With the prevalence of sexually transmitted diseases, people who are sexually active and wish to have the protection that condoms provide are frequently carrying condoms on or near their person. However, it is often inconvenient for a person to have to carry a condom on their person in social situations. One way to carry a condom is to keep a package in one's pocket. This though may lead to damage to the condom and is inconvenient for a person to search through his pocket at a time just prior to engaging in physical contact with another person. Alternatively, a man may wish to carry a condom in his wallet which often leads to damage to the condom. This may result in a person not carrying a condom who then engages in unprotected sexual contact.

To inconspicuously carry a packaged condom, other prior art have use cases designed to appear as jewelry. The disadvantage to this is that at the moment when a person wishes to use the packaged condom, she must remove the condom from the faux jewelry. This can be difficult and may lead to frustration.

Therefore, a condom carrying device is needed that can carry a condom and keep it concealed but yet make the condom readily available for use. Also, the device should be able to be attached to a person's clothing so that the device will not be used.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

A retaining clip for holding a personal article in accordance with the present invention comprises a planar central member having a first end and a second end extending transversely. A
5 retaining arm originates from about the first end of the central member for holding a personal article. Also, an attaching arm originating from about the second end of the central member is provided for affixing the retaining clip to an article of clothing.

In a preferred embodiment of the invention, the attaching arm and retaining arm have ends that are bent upward away from the central member. Thereby, a user of the clip can easily place a
10 package such as a packaged condom between the retaining arm and the central member. Also, a user can attached the clip to an article of clothing by positioning the clothing such that it held between the attaching arm and the central member.

In a further embodiment, the retaining arm is provided with a dimple. The dimple is formed such that it extends outward from a central portion in the retaining arm toward the central
15 member. This allows the clip to retain a package such as a packaged condom.

With the clip made in accordance with the present invention, a person who wishes to carry a packaged condom discreetly can do so. The clip can be retained beneath the person's clothing while retaining the packaged condom. Additionally, the condom is readily accessible to the person when he or she wishes to remove it from the clip.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The novel features believed characteristic of the invention are set forth in the appended claims. The invention itself, however, as well as a preferred mode of use, further objectives and advantages thereof, will be best understood by reference to the following detailed description of illustrative embodiments when read in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, wherein:

Figure 1 is a front side perspective view of a retaining clip in accordance with the present invention shown holding packaged condom;

Figure 2 is side cross-sectional view of the retaining clip shown in **Figure 1**;

Figure 3 is a back side perspective view of the retaining clip shown in Figure 1 without any package being retained;

Figure 4 is a front side perspective view of an alternative embodiment of the present invention shown with a surface member affixed to a package retaining beam of a retaining clip; and

Figure 5 is a perspective view of the retaining clip shown in Figure 1 being utilized by a subject.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

A retaining clip in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the invention discreetly holds a selected article or package while located substantially beneath a person's article of clothing. Thereby, the retaining clip can be secured to the person's article of clothing to ensure the unobtrusive retention of the selected article or package.

Figure 1 shows a retaining clip **10** holding a package **40**, which as depicted here contains a condom **42**. Clip central member **12** forms a central support of clip **10** from which cantilevered arms depend. Preferably, central member **12** is a rectangular strip with a length greater than its width. The thickness of member **12** is minimal in comparison to its length and width. As to the composition of clip **10**, it may be comprised of metal, plastic, other similar material, and combinations thereof.

Depending from central member **12**, are attaching arm **20** and retaining arm **30**. These arms are cantilevered and are formed transversely at about the longitudinal terminal ends of central member **12**. Bend **14** connects attaching arm **20** to central member **12** while bend **16** connects retaining arm **15** to central member **12**. Further, bends **14** and **16** are initially bent in divergent directions relative to each other until bends **14** and **16** pass a mid-point and begin to converge toward a central portion of central member **12**. Bends **14** and **16** are bent until a portion on each arm **20** and **30** is in proximate contact with a non-terminal portion of central member **12**. Hence, arms **20** and **30** are formed as opposing elastic and resilient members. Attaching arm **30** is primarily provided for affixing clip **10** to an article of clothing such as the waistline of a pair of trousers, a belt, an undergarment, and others. Retaining arm **20** is primarily provided for retaining

packages such as package 40.

As further shown in **Figure 2**, condom 42 is retained by retaining arm 20 with the aid of dimple 34. Dimple 34 is shown formed within arm 30. To form dimple 34, stamping could produce an indentation into a planar portion of clip 10. As shown, the position of dimple 34 is strategically located on arm 30 so that a planar center portion 44 of condom 42 is disposed between dimple 34 and central member 12 when clip 10 is being used to retain a package 40. The surface of dimple 34 facing central member 12 is preferably formed to be relatively rounded to form a smooth contact surface that would not substantially degrade the packing material of a retained package 40. Additionally, dimple 34 will aid in retaining condom 42 to clip 10 because rolled edge 46 forms a ridge relative to planar center portion 44. Thereby, rolled edge 46 acts as a wedge to aid in preventing package 40 from being unintentionally separated from clip 10.

At a terminal longitudinal end of attaching arm 20, tab 22 is slightly angled or bent upward and away from central member 12 along transverse edge 28 as shown in **Figures 2 and 3**. When no article is between attaching arm 20 and central member 12, edge 28 is proximate to or is in contact with a portion of the surface of central member 12. Raised tab 22 renders attaching and detaching clip 10 from an article of clothing easier to perform because it provides a surface for a user to manipulate arm 20. For example, a user who wishes to wear clip 10 on the inside seam of his waistline of the trousers would need only to align tab 22 over the outside portion his waistline. Once the opening formed between central member 12 and tab 22 is positioned over the top of the waistline, the user need only apply a minimal amount of pressure to force clip 10 down to engage the trousers waistline between attaching arm 20 and central member 12.

Retaining arm 30 at its terminal end has a tab 32 that is angled similarly like tab 22 along

transverse edge 38 as shown in **Figures 1 and 2**. Because arm 30 has dimple 34, which is preferably formed along edge 38, dimple 34 is proximate to or is in contact with a portion of the surface of central member 12. Raised tab 32 extends upward from central member 12 rendering the insertion and removal of package 40 easier. Tab 32 performs similarly to tab 22 when being manipulated to and from arm 20. For example, a user who wishes to affix a package 40 between dimple 34 of arm 30 would apply pressure to force arm 30 up and away from central member 12. Once package 40 is in the proper position, the user may release the lifting pressure from arm 30. Dimple 34 would then engage and retain package 40 in a secured position between arm 30 and central member 12. To remove package 40, a user would apply sufficient pressure to tab 32 to cause arm 30 to move outward from central member 12.

In **Figure 4**, an optional planar surface 36 is affixed longitudinally to the outer surface of arm 30 along a central portion. Planar surface 36 serves to smooth the outer surface of arm 30. This embodiment is useful for a person wearing clip 10 such that the outer surface of arm 30 is directed against a person's skin. With planar surface 36, a larger amount of surface area on arm 30 will contact the person's skin rendering clip 10 more comfortable to wear.

Figure 5 shows an example of retaining clip 10 being worn by a person. Therein, the person has positioned clip 10 discreetly such that a majority of clip 10 is disposed beneath the person's clothing. Top edge 58 of clip 10 at about bend 14 is positioned above the top edge of trousers 50 for a secured attachment. While clip 10 can be easily attached to other areas around waistline 52 of trousers 50, a convenient location is to locate clip 10 between front pocket 51 and back pocket 53. As shown, clip 10 is positioned on trousers 50 so that a portion of waistline 52 is between attaching arm 20 and central member 12. A section of belt 54 extends over the outer

portion of attaching arm 20 so that belt 54 substantially covers a significant portion of attaching arm 20. Only a small area of the clip should be visible, if at all, at around bend 14. To assure that none of clip 10 is visible to the public, shirt 60 may be allowed to extend down and flow over the top of belt 52. Package 40 is securely maintained in position between retention arm 30 and
5 central member 12. Should the person wish to remove package 40 a sufficient pull, and optionally lifting raised tab 22, should cause the removal

Clip 10 provides the advantage of being able to securely retain a personal article such as condom 40 while secured to a person's article of clothing. Thereby, a person can discreetly carry a condom while having the condom readily available for use. This convenient clip 10 can be worn
10 while substantially hidden beneath a person's clothing. While clip 10 is shown in **Figure 5** attached to a person's waistline, clip 10 can be worn on any article of clothing such as a pair of underwear or a shirt. With the use of clip 10, a person can carry a personal article such as a condom so that the person can avoid embarrassment or any stigma associated with carrying a condom.

15 While the invention has been particularly shown and described with reference to a preferred embodiment, it will be understood by those skilled in the art that various changes in form and detail may be made therein without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention.